

Safety: Officials remind warriors to be careful

By 1st Lt. Kelly Cahalan
8th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

As the buildup for next week's Operational Readiness Inspection begins, most daily routines will change significantly, but there's one routine that should not change – safety.

"During exercises, and particularly during an inspection, people are stressed out, tired and rushing through their procedures," said Lt. Col. Mark Picton, 8th Fighter Wing chief of safety. "While we have to move things quicker during a contingency, there is nothing in peacetime or combat that warrants doing something unsafe."

"A lot of times we'll see folks with 'Viper bites,' which is a bump on the head from where they ran into an (F-16) aircraft when they weren't watching where they were going," said Picton.

Injuries such as "Viper bites" and sprained ankles are avoidable, he said.

"When it's dark and troops are in a hurry, that's the most important time to be aware of what's going on around you and to be looking out for safety hazards."

Staying hydrated is another concern during exercises. In the cold weather, it's extremely easy for people not to feel thirsty and not to think about hydrating themselves, explained Picton. The winter weather is dry and the body still uses up a lot of water, especially under protective gear, so it's just as important to stay hydrated as in the summer months.

With a few winter month exercises under the belt, Wolf Pack members should be familiar with cold weather concerns. Dressing in layers and keeping extremities like ears and fingers covered can keep frostbite and hypothermia away, however, using the buddy system and ensuring that troops aren't overexposed to the cold is the best way to keep

Seventh Air Force commander stresses risk analysis

By Lt. Gen. Charles Heflebower
7th Air Force commander

As we make final preparations for our upcoming Pacific Air Forces Inspector General visit, I want each commander, supervisor and individual to make sure that we are taking proper precautions against the risks that we face. No part of this inspection requires us to put our people or equipment at unnecessary risk. Preserving combat capability for wartime operations is the way we must do business during exercises, inspections and real combat.

Our spin-up for this inspection has gone very well from the training aspect of preparing to go to war. However, I am concerned that we still have several injuries, no matter how minor, during each exercise that can

easily be avoided. Every commander will ensure that their unit reviews their risk analysis for the tasks that they perform. All hazards and risks will be identified to your entire organization with control measures in place to mitigate these risks for your people and equipment. This is a continuous process and needs to be repeated again before the inspection. Pay special attention to new personnel that have arrived in your unit since the last exercise and get them trained.

Commanders and supervisors must be actively involved in mission accomplishment and this includes ensuring that your people are doing their job right. A unique challenge of leadership is to ensure that the mission is accomplished safely. A mission is not successful unless it is performed safely.

safe, Picton said.

Many defensive fighting positions, or DFPs, use a kerosene heater to help protect defenders against the cold, but it can also be a source of carbon monoxide poisoning. All DFPs need to be checked at each shift change to ensure they are adequately ventilated and individuals should constantly be aware of ventilation within their area.

Special interest items that the inspection team will look at include reflective belt use, vehicle foreign object damage (FOD) checks and vehicle safety.

"We've seen a tremendous improvement in reflective belt use over the past couple of months thanks to commander involvement," said Picton. "Reflective belt use shouldn't be a concern; it should

be good common sense. People are hard to see at night around here, especially when they're in (camouflage) uniform. Making yourself visible to vehicle operators is a good way to protect yourself."

Col. Philip Breedlove, 8th FW commander, urges troops to operate with a "measured sense of urgency." In other words, it's up to each person to gauge how fast a task can be accomplished safely and accurately in a given scenario.

"We can perform outstanding on all our wartime duties, and be set for an outstanding rating, but one safety write up will nullify those efforts," he said. "Additionally, the Wolf Pack can't afford to have any of its team members injured or killed. Every member of the Pack is a valuable asset."

What have you done to personally prepare for the Operational Readiness Inspection?

Staff Sgt. Brian Gracey
8th Communications Squadron



I ensured that all my regulations are up-to-date and educated troops about what the inspection is all about.

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Ward
8th Security Forces Squadron

I reviewed Kunsan's Ability to Survive and Operate Guide, January 2001 edition, and went over several scenarios.



1st Lt. Diane Matti
8th Comptroller Flight



I went to the commissary, bought food, taught a self-aid and buddy care class and practiced UXO sweeps.

SrA. Charlie Hammonds
80th Fighter Squadron

I inspected my individual protective equipment and gas mask. I also updated my mask inspection card.



Staff Sgt. Marcy Owensby
8th Medical Group



I informed people about events during the last ORI and made sure they were aware of past problems in the medical group.

Staff Sgt. Shawn Smallwood
8th Logistics Support Squadron

I prepared the base support plan. It shows how the base is going to operate during contingencies.



Pride of the Pack



Job: 8th Supply Squadron receiving journeyman

Follow-on base: Luke Air Force Base, Ariz.

Hometown: Rome, N.Y.

Family: Mother, Sharon, father, Frank and brother, Alex

Hobbies: Soccer and volleyball

Words of wisdom: "Live life to the fullest and wake up each morning knowing what you need to accomplish."

The Pride of the Pack is nominated by his or her commander, first sergeant or supervisor, or any Wolf Pack member, for outstanding value to their unit and dedication to the mission. To nominate a Wolf Pack member, send a nomination to the individual's group commander.



Senior Airman Jennifer Swezey